

EMMA'S FLIGHT RECORD



Nine-year-old takes off in bid for flight record

VICTORIA, B.C. (CP)

Emma Houlston, a 9-year-old who first learned to fly while sitting on her father's knee, has taken off on a journey she hopes will make her the youngest person to pilot a plane across Canada.

Emma, of Medicine Hat, Alta., wrapped up the first leg of the flight from Victoria yesterday when she landed her father's Grumman AA-5 in Kelowna, B.C.

She left Victoria on July 10 and hopes to reach Newfoundland in two weeks.

"I've only been flying

for a few months but I think I can do it, and Dad will be with me anyway," said Emma, a Grade 3 student who is too young to hold a pilot's license.

Paul Houlston, a licensed flight instructor and vice principal of his daughter's school, is going along on the trip as the legal "pilot in command." He said Emma will handle routine flying, the navigation, and the radio, but she does not have the experience to handle an emergency.

A video camera mounted in the cockpit

will monitor the flight to ensure that he does not fly unless there is an emergency.

Houlston started teaching Emma to fly eight months ago after he had heard about Christopher Marshall, who flew across the United States last year at age 10.

"I began to wonder if Emma would be able to handle such a trip," Houlston said. "About four weeks ago when we finished her training, I realized she could, so here we go."

"I'm quite excited," Emma said before takeoff.

Crossing Rockies 'bumpy' for pilot, 9

MEDICINE HAT, ALTA. (CP)

Emma Houlston crossed the Rocky Mountains and, after a short while of bouncing around the clouds, made a smooth landing in her home town of Medicine Hat yesterday. About 25 residents, including her classmates,

came out to greet her.

"It was all right, but a bit bumpy," Emma said of her passage over the Rockies. Her father said Emma was able to maintain good speed because of a strong tailwind over the mountains, although she got airsick because of the turbulence. But she did not let go of the controls, he added.

The pair originally

planned to fly non-stop from Kelowna, B.C., to Medicine Hat, but put down for the night in Cranbrook because of thunderstorm warnings issued for the Crowsnest Pass region.

After resting most of the day and overnight here, Emma was to get behind the controls again this morning and take off for Regina. She hoped to land in the Saskatchewan capital at about noon.



FLYING START: Emma Houlston, 9, has a run on the tarmac at Victoria's airport yesterday. The Alberta girl hopes to become the youngest person to fly across Canada.



Flight across Canada is a lark for 9-year-old

WINNIPEG, MAN. (CP)

Emma Houlston says she is not flying a light plane across Canada only for the recognition—it is also a great vacation.

"I don't care if I get in the record books or not, it's the flight I want to make," she said after landing in the Manitoba capital yesterday.

Emma said the flight is less tiring than the hoopla. "I got up at 5:45 this morning for an interview," she said. The toughest part of the trip was over the Rocky Mountains. "It was really windy and bumpy over there."

Her father, Paul, agreed. But over the Prairies, he said, the problem is "the stress and boredom you get from looking

out at those limitless horizons." Emma is gaining valuable experience, her dad said. "She is improving and I'm really impressed with her."

"I act as the co-pilot and do some of the navigation, but none of the actual flying. I don't touch any of the primary controls."

Emma said she has never considered quitting. "I know that I can make it," she said, twirling her long straight hair with one hand, while clutching a stuffed dog in the other.

She enjoyed landing in the expansive city of Winnipeg on the fourth day of her trip. "It was nice; it's huge compared to Medicine Hat," she said with a giggle.



Pilot, 9, lands in Sudbury as heavy fog blankets Wawa

By Jane Armstrong

Toronto Star

SUDBURY, ONT.

Undaunted by heavy fog, Emma Houlston caught a strong tailwind yesterday and sailed past Wawa to land safely in Sudbury.

She is now about midway through her attempt to become the youngest person ever to fly a plane across Canada.

"Wawa was fogged in so we couldn't land there," said Paul Houlston. He said they were aiming for Wawa when they left Thunder Bay about noon.

"We dodged over to (nearby) Chapleau, but we were at 2900 m and sailing along on a 30- to 40-knot tail wind so we decided to just keep going to Sudbury," he told Canadian Press shortly after the two touched down in Sudbury at about 3:15 p.m.

The unscheduled detour shaved a full day off her schedule, and the junior flying ace hopes to reach Ottawa sometime today.

Yesterday's heavy fog was Emma's second bout with inclement weather in three

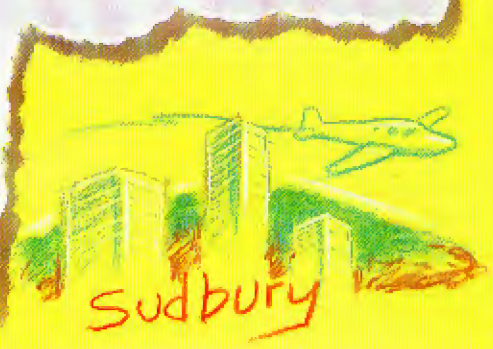
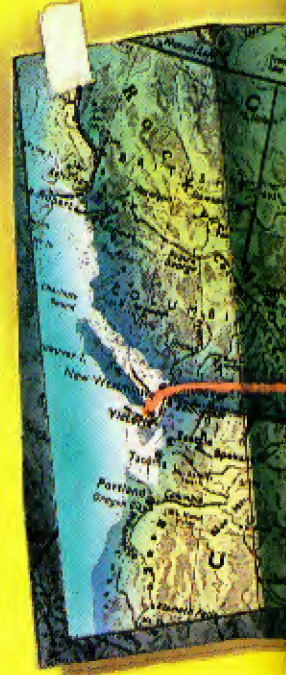
days. On Friday, the father-daughter team was grounded in Winnipeg because Thunder Bay was fogged in.

Earlier, Paul Houlston said Emma's biggest problem is that she gets bored just sitting still and looking at the scenery. Houlston bought some tapes of children's books to occupy her.

Her father said that the average of three hours of flying a day should not be too taxing for Emma, who is doing all the actual piloting, including landing and taking off.

"I just sit there and navigate and Emma sits and tries to keep the plane on the straight-and-narrow," said her father.

"I used to think she was just a kid, and she is. But I hadn't realized just how grown up she is."





Pilot Emma, 9, still on course in bid to set Canadian record

OTTAWA, ONT. (CP)

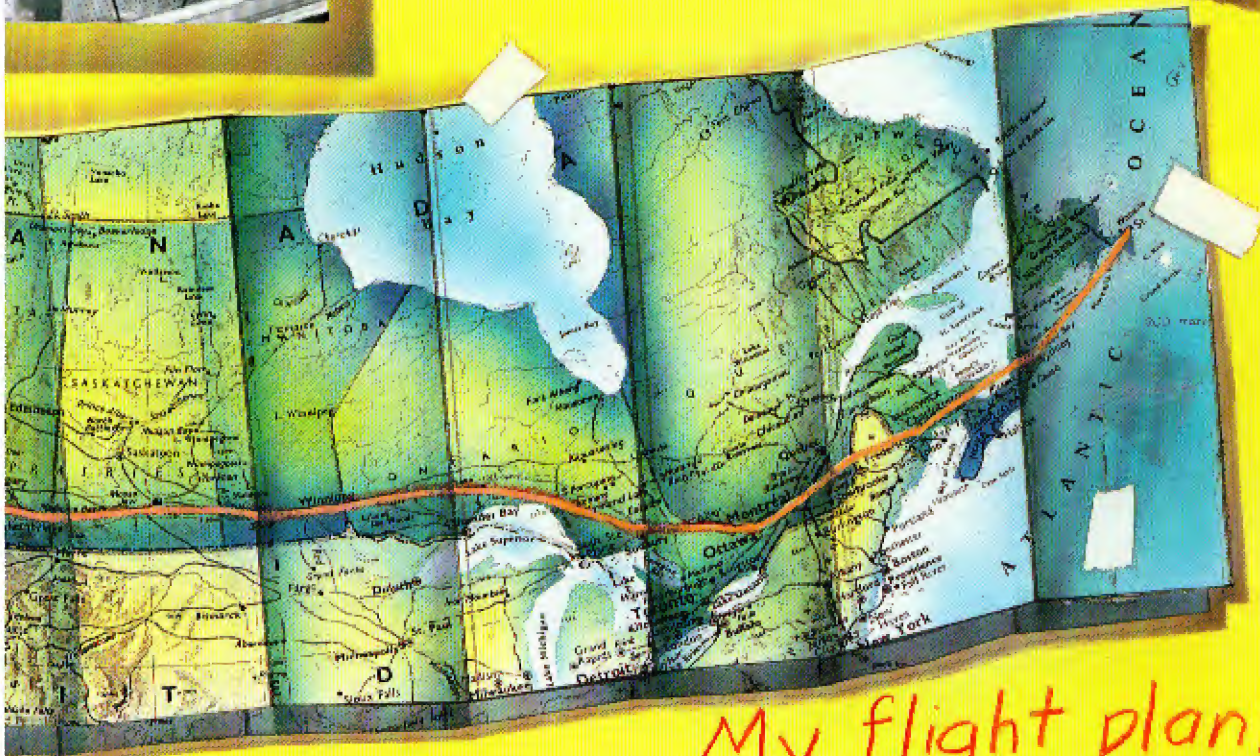
Emma Houlston was all smiles as she stepped onto the tarmac at Rockcliffe Airport just before 1 p.m. yesterday. She and her father arrived 30 min ahead of schedule on their flight from Sudbury.

They were lucky with the weather and had a trouble-free flight. They were to stay

at the Chateau Laurier Hotel, but they had time to visit the Parliament Buildings before settling in for the night.

Emma and her father were to leave Ottawa early today for Montreal, then Fredericton, N.B., Charlottetown, P.E.I., and Sydney, N.S. They have about ten days to go in their journey to St. John's, Nfld.

Canadian Press



My flight plan:

Emma finishes record flight across Canada

ST. JOHN'S, Nfld. (CP)

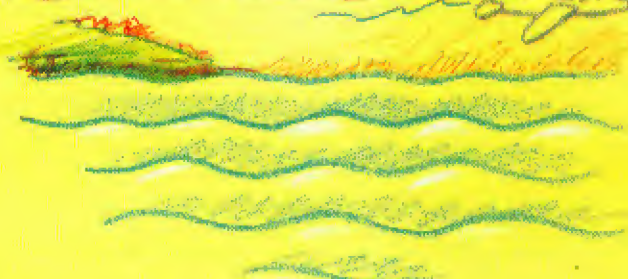
Nine-year-old Emma Houlston became the youngest person to pilot a plane across Canada when she landed here yesterday after a five-hour flight from Sydney, N.S.

Clutching her stuffed mascot, the Alberta schoolgirl brushed off reporters' questions about the trip. But she admitted that she did not think she would try it again.

"I don't know," she said. "Once is enough."

The leg to Newfoundland was considered the trickiest of

the flight. Most of it was over open water in air corridors noted for unpredictable and unfavorable winds. Houlston said his daughter had no trouble with the flight. "I could hardly believe our luck when the weather was reported as good for the entire trip."



Canadian Press



I Did
it!